CLAIMS:

1. A method of configuring a hand-held instrument for determining the concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid or a control, the method comprising the steps of providing a configuring computer having a first port for transmitting at least one of instructions and data for configuring the instrument, providing on the instrument a second port for receiving said at least one of instructions and data from the configuring computer, coupling said first port to said second port, transmitting said one of instructions and data to configure said instrument from said first port, receiving said one of instructions and data at said second port, and configuring said instrument according to said one of instructions and data transmitted from said first port and received at said second port.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of providing a configuring computer having a first port for transmitting at least one of instructions and data for configuring the instrument comprises the step of providing a configuring computer having a first port for transmitting instructions for configuring the instrument.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the step of providing a configuring computer having a first port for transmitting at least one of instructions and data for configuring the instrument comprises the step of providing a configuring computer having a first port for transmitting data for configuring the instrument.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of providing a configuring computer having a first port for transmitting at least one of instructions and data for configuring the instrument comprises the step of providing a configuring computer having a first port for transmitting data for configuring the instrument.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the hand-held instrument further comprises a display for displaying information related to the determined concentration, the step of transmitting said one of instructions and data to configure said instrument from said first port comprising the step of transmitting said one of instructions and data from said first port to configure said display.

6. The method of claim 2 wherein the hand-held instrument further comprises a display for displaying information related to the determined concentration,

the step of transmitting instructions from said first port to configure said instrument comprising the step of transmitting instructions to configure said display.

7. The method of claim 3 wherein the hand-held instrument further comprises a display for displaying information related to the determined concentration, the step of transmitting said one of instructions and data to configure said instrument from said first port comprising the step of transmitting data to configure said instrument display.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port comprises the step of transmitting data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the instrument to the computer.

10. The method of claim 9 and further comprising updating a file in the computer with the transmitted data.

11. The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port comprises the step of transmitting data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the instrument to the computer.

13. The method of claim 12 and further comprising updating a file in the computer with the transmitted data.

14. The method of claim 3 further comprising the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant

component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port comprises the step of transmitting data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the instrument to the computer.

16. The method of claim 15 and further comprising updating a file in the computer with the transmitted data.

17. The method of claim 4 further comprising the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port comprises the step of transmitting data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the instrument to the computer.

19. The method of claim 18 and further comprising updating a file in the computer with the transmitted data.

20. The method of claim 5 further comprising the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port comprises the step of transmitting data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the instrument to the computer.

22. The method of claim 21 and further comprising updating a file in the computer with the transmitted data.

23. The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port comprises the step of transmitting data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant

component of a body fluid from the instrument to the computer.

25. The method of claim 24 and further comprising updating a file in the computer with the transmitted data.

26. The method of claim 7 further comprising the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein the step of transmitting one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port comprises the step of transmitting data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the instrument to the computer.

28. The method of claim 27 and further comprising updating a file in the computer with the transmitted data.

29. The method of claim 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 or 7 wherein the steps of transmitting said one of instructions and data to configure said instrument from said first port and receiving said one of instructions and data at said second port comprise transmitting said one of instructions and data through a fiber optic coupler from said first port to said second port.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein the instrument comprises an instrument for determining the glucose concentration of blood, a blood fraction or a control.

31. The method of claim 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 or 28 wherein the step of transmitting said one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid from the second port to the first port comprises the step of transmitting said one of instructions and data concerning determined concentration of a medically significant component of a body fluid via a modem from the second port to the first port.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein the instrument comprises an instrument for determining the glucose concentration of blood, a blood fraction or a control.